**Minutes of the Population-Level Estimation Workgroup**

March 17, 2017

Present: Many people, including many that are not part of the workgroup

This was the face-to-face workgroup meeting in Atlanta.

* Martijn gave a short introduction of the workgroup, and started the discussion on method evaluation. He pointed out that real positive controls are problematic because they are known, and doctors will try to mitigate the effect of the drug.
* It was remarked that the current evaluation appears to focus only on detecting effects present during exposure. The notion of effects that require accumulation of exposure seems missing. Even though those effects would still fall under effects during exposure, we are indeed not focusing on such effects. They are not out of scope for OHDSI, but are probably out of scope for this evaluation since we have to focus on something, and effects during exposure are an important topic.
* Whilst our negative controls can have unmeasured confounding, our synthetic positive controls are not able to preserve unmeasured confounding. One way to address this shortcoming of our methodology is to mimic missing confounding by removing data available for adjustment.
* Evaluating against Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) is important for political reasons, but is problematic because
  + RCTs themselves are likely biased due to non-random acts after the moment of randomization
  + RCTs typically have limited sample size
  + Even though we would like to have RCTs with observational data preceding the moment the effect was known, the effect was probably already known long before the trial
* Adler Perotte may help in identifying RCTs to include in our evaluation. He has been working on codfying the inclusion and exclusion criteria for trials so they can be implemented in the CDM.
* Alejandro Schuler has developed an advanced approach for simulating effects. It may be possible to use this to injection signals on top of negative controls.
* Many more people have indicated they want to be involved in the task force. Martijn recommended they post their intentions on the forums, so they can be added.